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ECONOMICAL FURNISHING.



O be able to fit up a home in reasonably good style for a modest sum, is one of the most valuable of faculties; indeed that kind of ingenuity that utilizes the materials at hand, making a little do the work of a great deal, has an actual money value in producing good general effects, as in the hands of a person with such gifts five hundred dollars will accomplish better results, and give more comfort, than a thousand dollars can be made to do where one selects indiscriminately, and because the articles chosen happen to strike the fancy.

The transforming and renewing qualities of paint, paper and kalsomine are well-known to the majority of persons, but many do not know the ease with which they are applied, and the small expense in money that is required if a little tact and judgment are used in their management and handling.

Some months since a lady, who does a great deal of artistic work, designing, sketching, and the like, after a wearisome search for comfortable apartments, resolved to try and fit up for herself the rooms that she could not get already fitted for any price within her means. The upper floor of a wide, old-style three-story house was selected for the purpose. It was somewhat removed from the fashionable quarter, but yet in a thoroughly reputable street, and easy of access by several street-car lines. There were two large rooms, front and rear, and two hall bedrooms, both accessible from the large rooms as well as the hall. They were wide and roomy, and had each a large window, and a transom over the door. Between the large rooms were clothes presses, with ample cupboard and drawer-room, and doors opening through the clothes presses between the rooms connecting them in the usual manner. There were green outside blinds and small panes of glass, although the entire windows were quite large. The walls were roughly plastered and kalsomined, and the woodwork, although plain, was solid and substantial. The floors were rough and uneven, and, in common with the other woodwork, were a good deal the worse for wear and time.

It was an unpromising place, and only a woman with tact, patience and genius would have had the courage to attempt a reformation in its appearance.

Fortunately the occupants of the house were good-natured, and did not object to the noise and confusion consequent upon a little repairing. A carpenter was called in who repaired doors, blinds, sashes and woodwork generally, and also drove in the nails and planed down the unevenness of the floor. Less than a day's work put that portion of the premises in good order. The ceilings were replastered where the plaster was loose and broken, then a thick coat of very light greenish-gray dry-sized kalsomine was laid on, and the upper portion of the walls of the large room received a coating of the same, only a shade darker. A dado of gray and gold paper was put around the large rooms, and a neat, inexpensive paper was selected for the bed-rooms.

The woodwork was painted in the two colors to match the kalsomine, and the floor was stained walnut-color around the edges, as rugs were to be used on the large rooms.

The place was now ready for the furnishings, and the entire cost of the materials and work, aside from the artist's own and a woman in her employ, was less than \$25.

Spring roller shades the color of the walls were put up at the windows, the entire set of six costing less than \$5, and walnut poles were adjusted at the windows and over the doors, at about fifty cents for each one.

The front room floor was covered with a handsome Turkish rug, already on hand, and the various artistic belongings of the owner were arranged about the room. A covering for the back room floor must be provided, and, as that was to be the general utility room and workshop, a rag carpet of light color and excellent quality was selected for the purpose, at a cost of sixty cents per yard, one yard wide. As it was coming warm weather, the bed-room floors were covered with matting, and a strip of carpet was laid in front of each bed. The matting cost about twenty-five cents per yard, and the carpet was selected from remnants at about sixty cents per yard for really excellent tapestry Brussels. As the bed-rooms were small, it was desired that a cheffonier of fair size would be more desirable than a dressing-case, and would give more drawer room for the space it occupied.

The wash-stand for each room was entirely

home-made, but served its purpose very well at the most trifling expense. A dry goods packing case, about twenty-six inches wide, of the same depth, and about forty inches long, was set upon one side, and the cover removed, leaving an open front. Four blocks, each about four inches square, were placed under the corners, and fastened by strong nails driven through the boards of the box. In these blocks holes were made and into them ordinary iron socket bedstead casters were fitted. The result was an easily moveable box or cupboard, with twenty-six by forty inches top surface, and the same space in shelf room on the bottom inside. It was lined with plain cambric, about the color of black walnut, and covered with a section of oil-cloth exactly the size of the top, fastened down with small tacks. A curtain of gray felt, with a bold design in golden rod, cat-tails, and long grasses painted in oil, was fastened by small tacks from the upper edge of the box, and fell slightly full, nearly to the floor, entirely concealing all but the lower edges of the casters. The curtain was in two sections, and met in the middle of the front, falling together by its own weight. A large square cover with a border to match the curtain, was spread over the top, and held in place by a few fancy brass nails. An ornamental towel rack was fastened by small screws to one end of the box, and this article of furniture was ready for use, and was a great improvement on the store-bought wash-stands in its greater extent and size. A linen cover was provided, or large mats, upon which the various toilet articles were set.

A receptacle for soiled handkerchiefs and collars was crocheted in the form of a large pocket, and tacked to the inside of the box, and work-baskets, boxes, and various useful articles found storage on the broad space at the bottom. In favor of this stand it may be said that, after using it, the owner preferred it to anything of the sort, even a handsome one with a marble top. It is much more agreeable to use, and altogether more roomy and comfortable, as well as less noisy, and with less danger of breaking heavy pitchers or bowls by careless or hasty handling.

Over the stand hung a large mirror, and on either side of this were double brackets, holding various ornamental and toilet articles.

Another home-made convenience was a box about twenty inches square, set upon casters, and with a hinged cover. It was covered with cretonne, laid on in small perpendicular pleats, fastened at the bottom by brass nails, and finished at the top by a full box-pleated, pinked out ruffle of the same goods, that set up even with the edge and concealed the joining of cover and box. Inside were separate pockets for shoes, slippers, rubbers and leggins, while the middle of the box contained a basket for shoe brushes, polish, and like necessities. The cover was stuffed with sea grass and covered with the cretonne, and a band of furniture gimp put on with brass nails finished it very neatly.

This box proved so convenient that it was almost immediately duplicated as a receptacle for hose as well as for fancy work, odds and ends, bundles of pieces, and the many small conveniences for sewing, for which women never have enough room. The entire cost was not over seventy-five cents each, aside from the work. It was necessary to add to the number of chairs, and a couple of oak-framed perforated seat and back chairs were purchased at a storage warehouse for seventy-five cents each. Cushions were made of dark-blue cashmere, the remnants of a dress, and were fastened to the chairs by sewing through the holes in the back and seat with doubled and twisted drugget cord, in a shade of golden-yellow, the twine passing entirely through both cushion and wood, and following the pattern of the perforations on the blue surface of the cushion in the yellow of the cord. Yellow ribbon bows were tied on the corners at the back of the chairs, and the frames were gilded by the artist herself. The amount of admiring comment bestowed upon the work when finished would have repaid the effort tenfold, even without the fact that the chairs were voted by far the most comfortable seats in the place.

Several other chairs that were in a semi-invalid condition were refitted with new carpet and upholstery seats, and one with a broken back was sawed off even with the seat and full-cushioned, and a row of deep fringe put all around the seat. The lower ends of the legs were sawed off, and a charming half-high stool was the result. A handsome rocker and easy-chair were a part of the original possessions of the artist, and nothing further in this line was needed except a lounge. For this want a certain outlay was necessary. An order was given for a plain couch in muslin. This, in fair quality of material and well made, was to cost \$16. A cover of linen was put over it for the summer, with the idea of having it handsomely covered for the coming winter's use. For the many tables

necessary for the variety of work to be done, equally economical provision was made. Several kitchen tables with maple frames, stained walnut color, were ordered at \$1.75 each. The tops were covered with dark-green felt, and drapery curtains of the same material, with a little dash of color in painted autumn leaves for borders, were tacked around the back and ends. Small, round-headed brass nails were used, and the draperies were set outside of the over-lapping cover of the top. The front, where the worker sat, was open, and at either end of the table underneath were rows of shelves, that depended from the sides of the frame. These were found of the greatest use in holding materials and cases for colors, brushes, pencils, and the like. The shelves were made of boards, such as those upon which dress goods are folded, and were substantial enough, and at the same time very easy to work, the last being an important item, as they were all put in place by the artist, who was less a woman of muscle than of brains.

The draperies for the front windows were of Madras muslin, embroidered with gold floss, and cost about \$8 for the two windows. They were not, of course, very elegant, but they were quite good enough for the place they occupied. The rear windows were draped with printed etamine, in cream ground, with bright flowers and vines. The goods cost but fifteen cents per yard. Fancy woven etamine, in cream-white, costing sixteen cents per yard, and plainly hemmed at top and bottom, was put up for summer hangings over the doors. Some pieces of worsted work were used to cover large foot-cushions that were filled with sea-grass, and had bows of bright ribbons, of odd colors and patterns, set upon the corners. A large easel held a fine picture, and a length of Japanese silk in fancy colors was knotted about the top of the easel, and draped on either side of the frame of the painting. There were grates in the rooms, and on cool days a cheerful fire burned there.

H. B. M.

PANELS of crimson plush with old brass relief border are used as a backing for gas and candle brackets of bronze, and constitute a pleasing framing.

INTENDING purchasers of bronze articles, useful or ornamental, should be on their guard against investing simply in brittle spelt and zinc, coated with bronze color.

SMALL mounted terrestrial and celestial globes are now turned out in brass, as ornaments, the surface being etched. The two hemispheres are unscrewed at the equator, the cavity within affording a secret storage for trinkets and other articles.

TRUTHFUL PAPER POLISHER.—The threading of glass with slender filaments has been accounted the highest evidence of skill of the glassmaker. One of the finest specimens we have inspected of this art is a polisher of Turkish production for passing over the surface of paper after erasure. It is much in the shape of an inverted mushroom; the long crystal handle showing within a mass of light-colored threads that presently follow the convolutions of the base, ending in expansive spots that chequer the lower surface.

HANGINGS.—The patterns on the delicate textures in demand for summer hangings are in many instances in such soft tints as to present the appearance of a luminous haze resting on them. A portion of certain patterns consists of small dots of different tints shaded off. In double curtains, pale old gold or light corn color consorts well with pale neutral blue; also a blue and clear soft tint of cool green with delicate rose color.



TABLE IN MAHOGANY WITH BRASS RAIL AND FEET, DESIGNED AND MADE BY M'CRACKEN, STARK & CO.